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LITERATURE DEPARTMENT
OF THE
Board of Home Missions and the Woman's Executive Committee of the Presbyterian Church,
156 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY.

CATECHISM

Concerning the Mormons.

A HOME MISSION EXERCISE.

HYMN.

PRAYER: *That all present may have minds open to the thoughts to be brought forward.*

RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE READING: Matt., 7:15-27.

Leader.—Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Rep.—Ye shall know them by their fruits: Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Leader.—Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Rep.—A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Leader.—Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

Rep.—Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.

Leader.—Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Rep.—Many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?

Leader.—And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Rep.—Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

Leader.—And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

Rep.—And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand.

Leader.—And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

INTRODUCTION OF TOPIC.—LEADER.

HYMN.

(*It is suggested that the leadership of the various parts be assigned to different ones.*)

Leader.—Who are the Mormons?

All.—They are the people who have accepted the religious belief put forth by Joseph Smith of Fayette, Seneca County, New York, in 1830.

Leader.—Who was Joseph Smith?

First Voice.—Joseph Smith was the son of intemperate, untruthful and dishonest parents. The boy could only read and write most imperfectly, and bore a bad reputation. He claimed to have had visions when only 15 years of age. In 1823, the angel Moroni appeared to him three times, telling him that God had a work for him to do. He was instructed to search in the ground in a hill at Manchester, N. Y., where he should find two gold plates and two transparent stones in silver bows, anciently called the Urim and Thummim, through which he should be able to read the writings on the gold plates. In 1827 Smith claimed to have found these plates, and the inscriptions being translated, the "Book of Mormon" was printed in 1830, a volume of several hundred pages.

Leader.—Of what does this book consist?

Second Voice.—The "Book of Mormon" purports to be an account of the ancient inhabitants of America. It is a collection of sixteen books supposed to have been written by various prophets at different times. There are about 300 passages taken from the Bible but no mention of their source is made. The book begins with an account by Nephi who, about 600 B. C., left Jerusalem and came to America. The history is continued by others, and finished by Mormon, who

gave the plates to his son Moroni, who, in 420 A. D. buried them in the hill where they were found by Smith.

Leader.—Who is supposed to have been the real author of the "Book of Mormon," or "Golden Bible," as it is often called?

All.—Solomon Spaulding, who wrote the book as early as 1810–12, but could find no publisher. It was copied in the printing office by one Sidney Rigdon, a printer, and by him was given to Smith after the death of Spaulding, such additions being made as suited the purpose of the new prophet.

(It would be of interest to follow these answers with more details if possible.)

Leader.—What was the history of the Mormons from 1830 to 1846, the settlement in Utah?

All.—Smith and Rigdon, after the issue of the "Book of Mormon," at once began to preach the new doctrines. On April 6th, 1830, a church was organized at Manchester, Ontario Co., N. Y., and in June of that year there were 30 adherents. In January, 1831, they all moved to Kirtland, Ohio, which was to be the New Jerusalem. Securing many converts, among whom was Brigham Young, they sent out missionaries through the States and even to England. They became involved in troubles with their neighbors, and were obliged to go to Missouri. The troubles here assuming the proportions of civil war, they migrated to Illinois. Here they were received most pleasantly and prospered much, until in 1844 Smith was killed by a mob who resented his teaching concerning polygamy. Brigham Young became President, and the Mormons moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, 1847.

Leader.—What led to the Mountain Meadow massacre?

All.—The coveteousness of the Mormons, who, seeing the abundant supplies and fine herds of cattle of the emigrants to California, massacred and plundered them. For this murderous deed John D. Lee was canonized by the Mormon Church, but he was afterwards betrayed by the Mormon Hierarchy, and was tried, found guilty, and executed in 1877 by the United States authorities.

Leader.—Has Mormonism spread?

All.—Yes, in the United States alone it claims about 300,000 converts, and has adherents also in all parts of the world.

Leader.—Where in the United States are the Mormons located?

All.—The headquarters are at Salt Lake City, the "Zion" of "The Latter Day Saints," as the Mormons call themselves. Utah is practically a Mormon State. There are also large colonies in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona, with smaller ones in almost every State in the Union.

Leader.—Of whom do they make converts?

All.—The large majority of the converts were made among the more ignorant of the people of Northern Europe, but of late years the Mormons have converted to their faith a number of the Mountain People of the South, and also of Americans in towns and cities of the various States.

Leader.—What are the sources of Mormon power?

All.—The thorough organization of the church, by means of which the acts and life of even the most humble member is known to the heads; the

financial system, which demands a tenth of his income from each church member, and its missionary methods.

Leader.—How many church officials has the Mormon church?

All.—At the head of the church is the President, then come the twelve apostles, about 400 bishops, next 5000 priests and teachers, and last, more than 6000 deacons.

Leader.—What are some of the duties of these officials?

All.—To collect tithes.

Leader.—What efforts do the Mormons make to extend their religion?

All.—They send out annually hundreds of missionaries to various parts of our land and to Europe.

Leader.—Are the children of Mormons usually educated?

All.—They are not.

Leader.—What is the most notable building in Utah?

All.—The Mormon Temple at Salt Lake City, which was nearly 40 years in building, and which is estimated to have cost $10,000,000. With the exception of St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York, it is the costliest ecclesiastical structure in the country.

Leader.—What are some of the teachings of Mormonism?

All.—That God has a bodily form; that He is the patron of polygamy; that polygamy gives rank in heaven; that there are many Gods, but Adam is the God of this world; that eventually

the Mormons are to possess this land; that "their church is a kingdom both temporal and spiritual, set up in these last times to overthrow and dominate every other government on earth."

NOTE.—*It would be well to procure the leaflet (free), "Mormon Articles of Faith Explained," published by the Literature Department of the Board of Home Missions and the Woman's Executive Committee. Have parts of this read and then discussed.*

HYMN.

PRAYER: *That those led away by this false faith may have their eyes opened to its evil.*

UTAH A STRATEGIC POINT.

NOTE.—*If possible, have a map of the United States where all can see it.*

Leader.—What is the size of Utah?

All.—Utah is 1 7-10 times the size of New York, and 1 6-10 times the size of all the New England States.

Leader.—How large a population has Utah?

All.—Utah has a population of 207,905. If as thickly settled as New York State it would contain 10,500,000 people.

Leader.—When was Utah admitted as a State?

All.—July 4, 1896.

Leader.—What struggle showed itself at the time of the admission of Utah as a State?

All.—The struggle between the Mormons and the Gentiles for political supremacy.

Leader.—What effect will the fact of woman suffrage have in this struggle?

All.—Its tendency will be to strengthen the Mormon vote, as each Mormon who practices polygamy can thus control two or more votes.

Leader.—Is it probable the population of Utah will increase rapidly?

All.—Yes, the dry, stimulating climate, united with the beauty of its mountains and valleys will no doubt attract many. In addition, it has extensive and valuable deposits of gold, silver, copper and coal. Great Salt Lake would supply the world with salt, and never miss it. At Salma there are five mountains of the vast Wahsatch peaks of solid rock salt so pure and clean that one can read through a block of it.

Leader.—What influence should this fact have upon Home Mission work in Utah?

All.—It should make it the more imperative that every possible effort should be put forth now while the population is small, to break down the bulwarks of Mormondom, to enter its stronghold, and to win its followers for Christ. The work can be more easily done now than it can ten or twenty years hence.

HYMN.

PRAYER: *That members of Christ's church may realize their responsibilities in this matter.*

PRESBYTERIANISM AMONG THE MORMONS.

Leader.—When was mission work begun by the Presbyterian church in Utah?

All.—In 1871, at Salt Lake City, the First Presbyterian Church was organized by the Rev. Josiah Welch, the meetings being held in a stable loft.

Leader.—What further step was taken in order to reach more effectually the Mormon population?

All.—In 1874 two mission schools were opened, one at Mt. Pleasant, under Dr. D. J. McMillan, and one at Salt Lake City, with Prof. J. M. Coyner as teacher. The care of these schools, together with that of all other mission schools, was assumed by the Woman's Executive Committee of Home Missions.

Leader.—Has the work spread?

All.—Yes; there are now 26 schools, with 51 teachers and about 2,000 pupils. Three of these schools are in Idaho, the others in Utah. (See map.)

Leader.—Why should these schools be established?

All.—Because by winning the children, and teaching them, before they are imbued with the spirit of Mormonism, the truth of Christ's love, is the most hopeful method of reaching these misguided people. The success of the work has proven this, but the schools are too few, and the advance movement often halts for the lack of funds to push it forward.

Leader.—What have been some of the results?

First Voice.—Dr. Wishard says: "Out of one of our most discouraging fields came a bright lad a few years ago, converted, seeking to enter the ministry. He worked his way through Park College, and was graduated last June, taking the first honors of his class. He entered the Western Theological Seminary and while we are in tears, he is with the Master in higher service."

Second Voice.—Out of this school work have grown 26 organized Presbyterian churches, regularly supplied with preaching by missionaries under the Board of Home Missions.

Leader.—When will the necessity cease for Mission schools among the Mormons?

All.—When the false religion, with its degrading rites and practices, has been swept away, and the pure gospel of Christ has free course among the deluded people.

PRAYER: *For God's blessing on the work of the Mission teachers among the Mormons.*

COLLECTION.

HYMN.

All.—The Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from the other.

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